

RELEASE IN PART B5

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, July 30, 2012 8:25 AM
To: H
Subject: Fw: FYI/Hill--3rd Wolf letter - Vietnam / Amb. Shear

Fyi

From: Posner, Michael H
Sent: Monday, July 30, 2012 08:16 AM
To: Mills, Cheryl D; Sullivan, Jacob J
Cc: Adams, David S
Subject: FW: FYI/Hill--3rd Wolf letter - Vietnam / Amb. Shear



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Glad to discuss further if you have any questions.

From: Finerty, Carol G (DRL)
Sent: Thursday, July 26, 2012 01:48 PM
To: Osullivan, Susan X (DRL); Sessums, Michael D; DRL-FO-DL
Cc: Pahigian, Anthony A; Zareski, Karen B
Subject: FYI/Hill--3rd Wolf letter - Vietnam / Amb. Shear

Lungren, Pitts, Smith Sign Wolf Letter Pressing For Firing Of U.S. Ambassador To Vietnam

LUNGREN, PITTS, SMITH SIGN WOLF LETTER PRESSING FOR FIRING OF U.S. AMBASSADOR TO VIETNAM

Letter is Third to Secretary Clinton on Topic of Shear and Also Expresses Disappointment in Failure to Publicly Raise Case of Imprisoned Vietnamese-American Democracy Advocate

Washington, D.C. (July 24, 2012) – Three congressmen have joined Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA) in calling for the removal of the U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam.

Rep. Dan Lungren (R-CA), Rep. Joseph Pitts (R-PA) and Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ) signed a July 19 letter to Secretary of State of Hillary Clinton released today urging the removal of Ambassador David Shear, who they believe has “sidelined” the issues of religious freedom and basic human rights in Vietnam.

The letter is the third from Wolf to Secretary Clinton on this issue. Wolf, co-chairman of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, previously called for the firing of Ambassador Shear after Shear committed to inviting prominent human rights and religious freedom activists and dissidents to the embassy’s July 4 celebration and then reportedly failed to do so. Wolf has repeatedly asked Shear and the State Department for a list of the invited guests and to date they have refused to provide it.

While Wolf, Lungren, Pitts and Smith were pleased by Secretary Clinton's mention of democracy advocates on her recent visit to Vietnam, they were disappointed she failed to publicly raise the case of imprisoned Vietnamese-American democracy advocate Dr. Nguyen Quoc Quan.

Wolf has spoken to many Vietnamese-Americans who have echoed his concerns about the lack of leadership Ambassador Shear and the State Department have demonstrated in terms of their commitment to human rights and religious freedom in Vietnam.

"The people of Vietnam yearn for American leadership in this realm – leadership which Ambassador Shear has been simply unable or unwilling to provide," the congressmen wrote. "As such, we urge you to dismiss Ambassador Shear from his post, and move swiftly to appoint an individual who will embrace the struggle of the Vietnamese people and advocate on their behalf."

Wolf believes the next ambassador to Vietnam should be a Vietnamese-American.

Below is the text of the letter:

*The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
2201 C St NW Ste 7276
Washington D.C. 20520*

Dear Secretary Clinton:

We strongly believe that human rights and religious freedom in Vietnam need to be at the forefront of bilateral relations with Vietnam, including any discussion about a strategic partnership with the United States. While we were pleased to hear that you mentioned democracy activists, lawyers and bloggers on your recent trip to Vietnam, we were deeply disappointed that there was no public mention of imprisoned Vietnamese-American Dr. Nguyen Quoc Quan. In fact, in a letter sent earlier this month prior to your trip, several members of Congress urged you to raise the matter of his continued detention and press for his release.

We do not believe that this administration, especially Ambassador David Shear, have sufficiently advocated for basic human rights and religious freedom in Vietnam. In fact, Ambassador Shear has sidelined these issues which has been a cause for concern. The people of Vietnam yearn for American leadership in this realm – leadership which Ambassador Shear has been simply unable or unwilling to provide. As such, we urge you to dismiss Ambassador Shear from his post, and move swiftly to appoint an individual who will embrace the struggle of the Vietnamese people and advocate on their behalf.

Unfortunately, the outstanding congressional request for the list of invitees to the Embassy Hanoi's July 4th celebration remains unfulfilled. As such, we also urge you to make sure that the list is provided in a timely fashion so that we are able to see which religious freedom and democracy activists were invited, if any.

We wish to see a mutually beneficial relationship with Vietnam. In order for this to happen, we must have confidence in this administration's efforts to promote religious freedom and democracy in Vietnam. We have lost confidence that Ambassador Shear is up to the task.

Sincerely,

*Frank Wolf
Dan Lungren
Joseph Pitts
Chris Smith*