TO: Dean Alfred L. Seelye  
Dean Glen L. Taggart

FROM: Dr. Lloyd D. Musolf, Chief Advisor

SUBJECT: Attached Document

May 9, 1960

By this time you have undoubtedly heard of the so-called political manifesto issued by a number of political leaders in opposition to President Diem. On the chance that you have not yet obtained a full copy of the manifesto, one is being sent to you.

On April 30 a press conference was held by these political leaders. The conference was attended by various foreign reporters and, I understand, by three Vietnamese reporters. The press conference was held only after the political leaders had sent the document to President Diem and urged that he meet with them. Included in their request was the statement that if he refused they would hold a press conference and release the statement to the press.

So far there has been no notice of the document in the local press with the exception of an editorial in one paper, the Tín Mới. This editorial referred to the signers of the document disparagingly but also criticized the Government along the same lines as the document, although not nearly as harshly. Although I have seen none of the notice in the foreign press, I understand that there have been stories in the New York Times, Times of London, The Associated Press, and Newsweek.

The manifesto seems to be widely known among Vietnamese in spite of the fact that there has been little notice in the local press about it. The Government has remained very quiet about it. There are signs, however, that it is somewhat apprehensive. Student groups are said to be particularly under suspicion, although in the past little vigor has been shown by these groups. As to our own program, we have had one direct indication of a change of attitude since the issuance of the manifesto and since the Korean riots.
Several weeks ago Jack Donoghue, our new sociologist-anthropologist, was asked to go to Korea to conduct some seminars on village administration. I suggested to him that the Asia Foundation might be interested in financing a trip for a faculty member of the NIA who might accompany Jack. Professor Giau of the NIA was designated, and the Asia Foundation indicated its interest. Within the last few days, Professor Giau has told Donoghue that the Government seems unwilling to permit visits to Korea and especially where the person making the visit is associated with the academic realm in some manner.

LDM/dcm

cc: Coordinator
the very existence of the country

I am writing to bring an important issue to your attention. For several years, there has been a persistent problem in my community. Despite your previous actions, the issue has not been resolved.

The problem involves a local business that has been operating without proper licenses and permits. This has led to numerous complaints from the residents, who are concerned about the safety and environmental impact of the business.

I urge you to take immediate action to address this matter. I believe that it is in the best interest of the community to ensure compliance with all local regulations.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]
Politics:

Though an anonymous regime which the colonialists created and protected has been overthrown and feudal organization of factions and parties which oppressed the people, have been destroyed, however, under the Republican regime you have built, the people have not yet received a more secure life, nor more freedom. A Constitution made for the sake of formality, a National Assembly which always moves in the same direction, non-democratic elections, all methods and "staged plays" copied from communist dictatorial regime, cannot help the people to make comparison with North VIET-NAM. Continuous arrests that have filled the prisons and jails to overflowing as they are at this very moment; then the public opinion has been silenced as well as that of the press; even the will of the people revealed by open elections is also crushed underneath and scorned, such as during the recent election of the second national legislature, causing the people not to care and to be discouraged. Religious sects and political parties were eliminated and "groups" or "movements" replaced them; these replacements have resulted in further oppressions to the people and have not protected them from the hand of communism. Evidence: religious sect areas which were previously deadly grounds to the Communists are now no more a secure zone and furthermore have become the actual areas of Viet-Ninh guerilla activities as they are anywhere in the rest of the country. Therefore, it has been proved, that although feudalistic, religious sect organizations were effective anti-communist elements. Eliminating these elements has opened the road to the Viet Cong and unconsciously "lengthened the sword of the enemy", while a more realistic political handling could have linked them together and lead them to reinforce the anti-communist fight.

Today the people are demanding freedom. You must, Sir, liberalize the regime, expand democracy, grant minimum civic rights, recognize opposition in order to let the people speak without fear so that grievances and resentment will last no longer. And then, when making a comparison with North VIET-NAM, the people of the South will see the value of true freedom and democracy and only then will make any effort to sacrifice themselves to protect this freedom and democracy.

Administration:

Although the country is reduced in size, the number of civil servants is larger, but the actual work is not being done because the Government, modeling communism; is bringing out political parties to control the Nation, to divide the upper crust of lower echelons, to sow distrust among individuals "in the movement" or "outside the group", to plant distrust among each other; while the real power is not in the hands of the responsible individuals, orders are actually issued from anywhere on the decision of an irresponsible "family" man, slowing down administrative machinery, paralyzing initiative, discouraging good will, at the same time that not one month in the press not smeared with incidents of corruption in public funds which cannot be concealed. It is an example of this graft to another, from one million to the other.

The administrative machinery which has been slowed down and is about to be paralyzed, needs to be urgently repaired; put proper people in the correct position; restore discipline from the top to the bottom and authority which must be in accordance with responsibility; take effect, initiative, honesty and thrift as the standards for promotion; let technical ability to be respected; get rid of the one-party idea; do not have a "family" mind; punish influence speculator bring to the light corruptness and abuse of power and then the situation can be saved, the human pride restore the faith in an honest and just Government recovered.
Military:

The French Expedititionary Army left the country and a Republican Army was formed thanks to America's aid in supplying modern equipment. However, in a group of brilliant youth with an air of pride such as the Army, which should only know that honor is to be respected and that blood and sweat must be used to protect the fatherland, where there is no place for the "family" or "faction" mind, there also the Government has brought (?) in the spirit of the one-party, the "Phong-Tao" or the "Can-Lao", thus dividing men of the same unit, planting distrust among friends of the same rank, using loyalty in the party and agreement with upper echelons as the standard for promotion, creating extremely harmful results; and the recent Tay-Ninh incident is only a small warning of danger.

The Army is the pillar for protecting the country, opposing invasion, eliminating rebels; it is only to serve the fatherland not because of a party or faction. It must be immediately reorganized: eradicate the "faction" and "family" idea in the ranks; revamp morale; create a high tradition of national pride; use combat performance, the will to serve and bravery as the standard for advancement, encourage the troops to respect the officers and the officers to respect the troops, eliminate all distrust, jealousy and resentment among friends in the same ranks.

Then, when there is an emergency, the Nation will have a man-like army with one mind and one heart, to protect our most precious fatherland, VIET-NAM.

Economics and Social Affairs:

A rich and fertile country with a surplus of food and clothing, public funds which do not have to bear military expenditures, war claims, profits from Government bonds, colossal foreign aid, a new market for all full of good will to invest in commercial enterprise,...so many suitable conditions to turn South VIET-NAM into a prosperous and productive area. But, yet, at present, people are unemployed with no possessions and short of money, rice is plentiful but cannot be sold; stalls in the market are full but no one is buying; sources of income are in the hands of a group of speculators using the party and the group as a screen to conceal the monopolies for their private interests. At the same time, tens of thousands of people are being mobilized for hard work and toil, to leave their work and go far from their homes and fields, separated from their parents, wives and children, to take up a life in collectivism in order to construct beautiful but useless Agroville's which tire the people, lose their affection, increase their resentment and for most of all, give an additional opportunity for propaganda by the enemy.

Economy is the foundation of Society and public opinion insures the endurance of a regime. The Government must quickly relieve the obstacles hindering economic development, get rid of all forms of monopoly and speculation, welcome all investments of foreign friends as well as natives, encourage commercial enterprise, develop industry, employ laborers in order to reduce unemployment. At the same time, it must halt all forms of using men as a coolie to build Agroville's, then Economy will flourish again, the civilian will live in peace and be content with his occupation, and Society will be reconstructed quickly in freedom and democracy.
Sir,

Perhaps this is the first time you have heard such fiery criticism unpleasant to your ear and contrary to your wishes. However, Sir, these words are entirely the truth, a bitter and harsh truth which you never have been able to hear, because unintentionally or intentionally, people have covered it up all around you, and because of the nature of your high position, did not let you know up to the point that the truth will explode in soaring waves of hatred and resentment, which will not be able to be stopped, of a terribly suffering people standing up to break the chains that restrain them, to clean up that which is foul, and to eradicate the injustices which have enveloped and oppressed them.

Because we truly wish that the fatherland avoid the life of horrible days of roaming about, that today we, with no fear of consequences to ourselves for our attitude, have come to sound the alert and ring the bell of the pressing danger in order to awaken the Government.

Up to now, we have remained silent, wishing to let the Government to be free to organize and take action. However, now the situation is pressing and we have noticed that we have the mission, in the situation of a "nation of ups and downs, the bores holding responsibilities" of speaking the truth, awakening public opinion, alerting the people, and achieving opposition in order to illuminate the road and urge the Government to quickly alter its policies to save the situation, protect the Republic regime, preserve the future of the country, and hope that the future will be bright for Vietnamese people and that they will enjoy peace and prosperity in Freedom and Progress.

Respectfully,
1. TRAN VAN VAN, Graduate from PARIS school of High Commercial Studies (H.E.O.); Former Minister of Economy and Planning.

2. PHAN KHOI SUI, Agricultural Engineer; Former Minister of Agriculture; Former Minister of Labor.

3. TRAN VAN NGOC, Professor of Secondary Schools; Former Prefect of SAIGON-CHolon City.

4. NGUYEN LIU VIEN, Medicine Doctor; Former Lecturer at the Medicine Faculty; Former Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees.

5. HUYNH KIM HUU, Medicine Doctor; Former Minister of Public Health.

6. PHAN NHU QUAT, Medicine Doctor; Former Minister of National Education; Former Minister of National Defense. (Catholic Leader)

7. TRAN VAN BN, Former Governor of Centre of VIET-NAM. (Catholic Leader)

8. NGUYEN TIEN MY, Medicine Doctor.

9. TRAN VAN DO, Medicine Doctor; Former Minister of Foreign Affairs; Former Chief of the Vietnamese Delegation at the 1954 Geneva Conference.

10. LE NGOC CHAN, Attorney at Law; Former Minister of National Defense.

11. LE QUANG QUAT, Attorney at Law; Former Minister of Information and Propaganda; Former Government's Delegate for North VIET-NAM.

12. LUONG TRONG TUONG, Graduate from High School of Public Works; Former Minister of Economy. (Former Govt. directed by Premier Ngo as Officer of Hoa Hao)

13. NGUYEN TANG NGUYEN, Medicine Doctor; Former Minister of Labor and Youth.

14. PHAM NHU CHUNG, Medicine Doctor; Former Minister of Public Health and Social Action.

15. TRAN VAN TUYEN, Attorney at Law, Former Minister of Information and Propaganda.

16. TA CHUONG PHUNG; Former Mandarin, Chief of Province of Binh-Dinh.

17. TRAN LE QUOC, Bachelor of Arts from the Vietnamese old System of Triennial Mandarin Examination, 1903 session, born in 1874.

18. Reverend NG VAN VUI, Former Catholic Vicar of Saigon Vicarage; actually Vicar of THAN-LA Vicarage, Trang-Bang, province of Tay-Ninh.