

FOREIGN SERVICE INSTITUTE

June 15, 1970

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger  
Assistant to the President  
for National Security Affairs  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Dr. Kissinger:

It would be a massive understatement to say that we very much appreciated your appearance at the Viet-Nam Training Center on June 12. Howard Sollenberger told me that you had the impression that the student questions were adverse, if not hostile. Since I know the general climate of opinion prevailing among the students, I would judge that approximately 85% of the student audience was in profound general agreement with the views you expressed. The other 15% could not be considered to be in over-all opposition, but would have varying degrees of misgivings. This group consists largely of young civilians, recently arrived from the campuses of this country, who tend to reflect the conventional wisdom of their peers. As Howard Sollenberger pointed out to you, the Department of State has, in any case, terminated its assignment of young officers to Viet-Nam, and instead is now providing more senior and experienced personnel.

I should like to make one other point. We have found that the best way to inform the students and broaden their perspective is to encourage a very free atmosphere of academic discussion. Students are given a clear right to question the wisdom of any program, or the effectiveness of its execution, but of course are not permitted to be discourteous or immature in expressing any such dissent. Your lucid exposition of present policy not only reinforced the understanding of the great majority of our students, but also broadened the outlook of those who have honest misgivings.

What is presently called "Vietnamization" now is, and indeed always has been, the crucial aspect of our policy in Viet-Nam, although not always recognized as such. Sophisticated advisory personnel can

have a certain impact upon the success and speed of Vietnamization. Your appearance at the Viet-Nam Training Center made a profound impression on more than one hundred such advisors. For this we are most grateful.

With kindest regards and appreciation.

Sincerely,

Ogden Williams  
Coordinator  
Viet-Nam Training Center

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