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Saigon, August 22nd, 1967

Dear Fraleigh,

Thank you for your introduction to Mr Grant. I think Mr Grant have impressed many Vietnameses with his broad and realistic ideas.

I have discussed the rice problems and the land reform with him. And Mr Crain under his order have also organized a lunch party at his home with USAID VN's land reform Staff to exchange opinions about land reform in Viet Nam.

The only point that worries me a little is many USAID officials here seem to want to transfer the experience from Japan and Taiwan (the peaceful countries) to land reform to Viet Nam (warring country) - But these land reform schemes were in fact tried during President Diem regime (without much success, even in his first years) and also put in practice in many areas under VC regime during the French war in 1945 to 1954. The VC in fact have in many regions in order to attract farmers to them, distributed land confiscated from the landlords, reduced land rent to nil (instead of 15-25% as in Diem law), limited land owning to 1-5 hectares, depend on regions (instead of 100ha under Diem, and 30ha under Nguyen ton Hoan and Nguyen Van Thanh regime) - They also forced the farmers to pay sometimes more than 50% part but they insist that it's only the contribution to the "liberation" not and only on temporary basis.

And when you ^{we} pacified or cleared any region, we apply ^{old} the land reform schemes (with a little variation in land rent, and land ownership) as recommended by USAID's staff in VN, and Mr Ferguson. I suppose that before the eyes of the farmers, we seem to defend the landlord, not the farmers as we always pretend and declare.

Just to ^{tell you} say in few words that we need more studies and new ideas, new schemes before launching a large scale land reform program in Viet Nam, if we would like to gain farmer's hearts and not to fail as before.

As I see, you have mentioned ^{the} I R & trials, I have made with my students on the delta fields. From the experience I gain with these trials, the success depends on integrated ^{new} methods (you call it package method) in the Philippines, requiring new inputs (like the new granulated γ BHC insecticides), and new cultural practices (mastering the water, more care against the weeds, closer planting, better nursery bed and so on), heavier fertilizers and so on.)

Every new methods are readily accepted by the farmers, contrary to the Agricultural experts in Viet Nam (USAID and Vietnamese alike).

We have most of the input to have 6-7 tons/ha of paddy at least in 3 months, with the new I R & seeds, but the most important of input, the insecticides against the borers (γ BHC in granulated form) are forbidden in Viet Nam because USAID technicians, and Vietnamese Entomologists still stick on the Endrin insecticides from Shell. Whenever we lack of this type of insecticide, the yield is very low, exactly the yield of the common farmers.

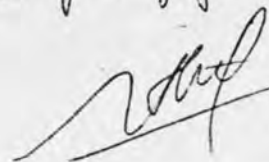
To enlarge our trials next year, can you intervene or provide me the insecticide, in time? (that is before October for the Centre, and before March-April for the Mekong delta?)

Each hectare requires about 50 Kg of 6-8% YBHC (in granulated form, the powder form is impossible to spread without great loss in the rice-fields), or the same quantity of Sevidol (6% YBHC and 8% YBHC) or ~~8%~~ Diazinon (8%, also in granulated form) - and we want to try tobacco, if possible next year.

Besides that Mr Grant have proposed me to discuss with Rockefeller people ^{with Philipps (IAE),} for a contract to support technically the increased production of rice in Vietnam. I think the idea is very good, and if USAID agreed, I can easily find the Vietnamese counterparts with the IRRI people, since I have trained a lot of Vietnamese students from the College of Agriculture in the such field. Who and how can I contact for? Can you show me the way to proceed. I don't think the Agricultural advisors in Vietnam are eager to act for such proposals. I have discussed once* with them but no following up answer so far.

I have resigned as Ton Assistant in the Premier office, and accepted the position of Director General of Chuong Ngai Sugar plant, and may be very soon the position of Commissioner for Economic development of I Corps. I tried to find out the position as near as possible to the Vietnamese farmers and really think now in ~~Central Government~~ ^{Saigon} they are more in the period of "hollow politics" than in development, and social welfare of the people.

Very truly yours



22/8/67
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- I just received the information from the delta that the North Vietnamese and FLN army here are also practicing the new varieties of rice brought from the North (Trần-linh-Tu² for example) and try to challenge the IR varieties from Rockefeller Institute. They also launched the campaign for intensive cultivation of rice in their occupied zone in the delta (close spacing, heavier fertilizer, transplanting of the 14-days old seedling instead of the 60 days old seedlings as commonly practiced here. - In ~~our~~ our trials of IR

we recommend 19-21 days old seedling). That's new challenge for us, if we pose our effort with Rockefeller Foundation? Is it?
- Does your wife join you on Washington? My best regards to her.

Thank you -

A large, stylized handwritten signature, possibly 'W. R.', is written across the middle of the page. The signature is written in dark ink and is somewhat slanted.A smaller, faint handwritten signature or mark is visible at the bottom left of the page. It appears to be a stylized name or initials.