

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

February 10, 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: General Donovan's Letter of February 5
Concerning Elections in Vietnam.

I am in agreement with the views in General Donovan's letter that elections in Vietnam should be deferred beyond the July date. His suggestion for the establishment of a new International Commission capable of insuring the necessary safeguards for free elections is under urgent consideration in the Department.

As you are aware, we reached agreement with the [] in our recent talks that Chou-en-lai's demand for a reconvenation of the 1954 Geneva Conference should be rejected and that at a minimum we should await the outcome of the elections which President Diem will hold in South Vietnam on March 1 before undertaking further action on the diplomatic front with respect to the future of Vietnam.

Our policy in Vietnam is directed toward:

- 1) the continued strengthening of the position of Free Vietnam under President Diem;
- 2) the preservation of peace and security under some new arrangement which would permit gradual termination of the old Geneva Accords; and
- 3) the eventual weakening of North Vietnam by political and psychological warfare.

I expect to discuss the problem of elections and the Geneva agreement with President Diem when I visit Saigon on March 14 following the SEATO Conference at Karachi.

John Foster Dulles

Enclosures:

Your letter of February 7.
General Donovan's letter of February 5

PORTIONS ENCLOSED

E.O. 12812, Sec. 1.3(a)(3)(4)

Date letter 10/26/82

NLE DATE 11/15/82

Authority MR 82-4227
By LKS 11/15/82