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July 29, 1963

Mr. Walter G. Stoneman
Director
Office of Vietnam Affairs
Agency for International Development
Washington 25, D. C.

EYES ONLY

Dear Stoney:

I am writing you to speak of my own personal plans and problems. My father has been quite ill for some months now and, although he seems to feel a bit better at the moment, I am quite concerned about him. He has asked me to come back and take over the business from him at the end of my one year assignment (which terminates 25 September). I feel obliged to come back and have a chance to talk to him and see how he is before making up my mind. I wonder, therefore, if it would be possible for me to return to Washington on consultation for about a week around the end of August.

I believe this might also assist the program, since by that time we should have some more clear-cut resolution, one way or the other, of the current crisis here. It might be valuable, at that time, to have a first-hand interpretation of what is likely to be the future course of events and how this may affect the Counterinsurgency Program.

I cannot guarantee, of course, that this will be the case by the end of August, but my frank assessment is that the situation here has reached a critical point, and that it can remain in this state no longer than a month before the Government will either be overcoming its difficulties or will be overthrown.

I would greatly appreciate getting your reaction to my coming back on consultation. I have discussed this with Joe Brent and Bill Fippin who believe it is a good idea under the circumstances.

The air has been thick with rumors that you might pay us a visit. I hope so and think we can manage to miss the rotor blades this time.

With best regards,

Rufus C. Phillips
Assistant Director for Rural Affairs

cc: Mr. Joseph L. Brent
Director/USOM
Saigon

GROUP 4

Downgraded at 3-year intervals.
Declassified after 12 years.

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