

Saigon  
Vietnam  
October 7, 1963

His Excellency  
President Ngo Dinh Diem  
Gia Long Palace  
Saigon, Vietnam

PRIVATE  
PERSONAL

Dear Mr. President:

I am sending you the attached article from the Times of Vietnam which has deeply shocked me. Friends had informed me upon my return that scurrilous rumors and lies were being circulated about me but I hardly expected that they would be believed in view of the service and assistance which I and my office in USOM have never ceased for one moment to continue to render to you and your Government in support of the strategic hamlet program and what has always been for me a joint cause.

In view of my deep, personal attachment to your country and the sacrifices I have made to be of some assistance to you and to it, as to my own country, I find this gross calumny particularly hard to bear. Even more so because it seeks to exploit the occasion of my father's impending death to imply that I am being recalled for other reasons. For your eyes only, I am enclosing the latest in a series of cables which speaks more eloquently than I of the true nature of my personal situation.

I am sure, Mr. President, that such an article would have never been printed had you known of it in advance and it is in a spirit of continued, personal friendship for you and your country and with a desire for justice, that I wish to ask that the Times of Vietnam print a retraction of what this article said about me.

Very sincerely yours,

Rufus C. Phillips