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Col. Tran Ngoc Chau
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Dear Chau,

I apologize for not returning your call sooner and trust that you and your family are well. I have been away for a while. Since coming back I was able to get a researcher to obtain some documents for me from the Lansdale collection at the Hoover Library in Pasadena. There are two memos from 1965, copies of which I enclose, which I thought would be of interest to you. I have some questions I would like to ask you in reference to our meeting in September 1965 in Kien Hoa. Also I have a few other questions I wanted to ask and trust you will be able to help me. I thought the best way to go about this was to send you the questions and then give you a call after you have had a chance to look at and consider them.

First in regard to our meeting in 1965 in Kien Hoa I have two questions to ask concerning matters of some sensitivity which did not show up in these memos. One was it seems to me that you had already had your disappointing meeting with Westmoreland which you relate in your part of *Prelude to Tragedy* and that you told me about it when I saw you in Kien Hoa. Is that correct? The other is about a more personal and sensitive conversation we had which I never wrote down. It has remained in my mind, however, until now. Perhaps because it reminded me of my last meeting with President Diem. I enclose on a separate sheet of paper my memory of that part of our conversation to see if you think it is reasonably accurate.

Remembers talking about this but not the details

Another question concerns the conversation you had with President Diem, which you relate in *Prelude to Tragedy* in which the President asked you what you thought about sending Nhu out of the country. I would like to quote you on that in my own book if you have no objections.

Another question is what did you think of General Thang and his work as head of Rural Construction? He certainly listened to Lansdale but how much was that reflected in his actions? Our old friend, Hoang Van Lac, seems to have disliked him intensely for reasons I am not aware of. I do believe he did an honest job on organizing the constituent assembly elections in 1966 as I was there and was able to observe him first hand. My last question is was I able to introduce you personally to Lansdale before I left in 1965 or did you meet him later through Vann?

Well that's about it. With all best wishes to you and your family, as always. I will call you towards the middle of next week.

Sincerely,

Telephone Interview with Chau on June 20, 2000

A. Background on Westernized visit.
Sent to 1st to Thieu & requested tradition
visit to do work to do in Hoa Hoa -
targeted at village introduction level -
work - Thieu asked to give him a
Division - instructed come down upstaff
Explains pac. situation - Talked alone -
what to want him to do

1. private or secretly etc.
at the village level.

Foot of District
9
to make
thickening
to know in year

2. SDC give mission / PF around
ARVN ready to introduce or
be left in PF

3. The man in village not civilian
Then the strong enemy - No one
knows who are VC -
ARVN must be reorganized into small
groups - Division too heavy, clumsy -
No command, just listened -

It is let you do strategy not within limits
provision - can reorganize not within 30 days
First thing cut off An Phu District - permit to
the VC - prove what they can do for
the people - All came from his first exposure

Chau Memory of my visit - we went out
to see some villages

Know who & why vs a vs VC Att
come to

~~187-9903~~ Mike Tru 5
Chau Appraisal -

Two previous ~~to~~ ~~chits~~ ~~the~~ Catholic -

1. What going on with going on
2. Who did that
3. What can go to the help

- ~~Need~~ ~~to~~ ~~have~~ ~~problem~~ ~~&~~ ~~grace~~ - -

- Thang - personal appraisal - was
suggested Chau to work in Cuba

progress - Known Thang in Cuba UN
when he was a batting commander -

Chau didn't like the UN - He didn't know
anything about what was going on at
grass roots level - good organization -

- superint complex - thinking numbers -

~~John Vane~~ - CIA group in Cuba (PAT + names)

- John Vane - talked in Elisberg -

"Not him to work as a CIA Agent, but
as a forced. (loyalty as a friend)

Thang good at being united commander - not a leader -

Didn't know how to talk to others -

~~was~~ good at giving orders. "Excellent

officer & honest. " - he told who. No initiative

complex not being able to listen