

Saigon, May 4th , 1967

Dear Mr R. P H I L L I P S,

I take the liberty to send you here enclosed a copy of my letter to my counsellor - who is also your friend - I am most encouraged to know you are following up with my case, and I do not doubt you would give me your full support in case opportunity happened for a happy end to the drama I am involved in most undeservingly.

I am asking my counsellor to undertake political activities which, in my opinion, are indispensable to prepare the way for undergoings in justice. I am quite confident in my counsellor's capacity and ability in any kind of suits of law. But my case is quite different : without political preparation and interferences, suits-at-law are condemned to unsuccess, in spite of the rectitude of rights and the high competence of lawyers. I wonder if my counsellor were qualified for political undertakings and if he were, would he agree to lend me his help to the utmost. The whole affair requires unabashed endeavour that cannot be motivated by money but only by conviction and friendship.

I must ask you then, my dear friend, considering the generous support you always lend to me, to back my counsellor in the mission I am charging him. With your actual help, your guidance and your advices, I think there is a chance that I could resume my properties which are so vital to my family being and future.

Everybody here feels hopeful with the arrival of the new Ambassador and his new team, for the change supposes the end of a policy heavily handicapped by the past. With new men and new conceptions, we do hope there will be a new accent on political and economical wars, in which the States and Vietnam need all men of good will and capability, without any discrimination of any sort. The way to peace requires victories in economy as well. We who have so much suffered, in our persons as well as in our country love, we do hope more than others that the new team will be able to make radical changes in American Policy here, a policy that should be realistic instead of being based on myths, created and defended in spite of common good sense.

Above all, there is the country.

We must be great enough, Americans and Vietnamese altogether, to forget, to forgive and to unite ourselves in one bloc and in complete union. I hope Mr Bunker will be up to this greatness.

With our love to Mrs Phillips and the children, please believe me, my dear friend,

Yours most truthfully,



Saigon, May 5th, 1967

Dear Mr Counsellor,

In hands your letter from April 19th. Thank you very much indeed for having made things quite clear.

Please understand that I had no intention at all to inflict to you any encumbrance with respect to your partnership. I was dealing with you as I usually do with my counsellors in Vietnam since years. Though they are working in partnership too our relations are based on trust and they simply send their fees when new expenses are not covered by the primary retainer I lodged on first agreement.

It is in this spirit that in my letter to you dated on February 16th, I declared as quoted :

"I consider your position as perfectly fair and your conditions quite reasonable, Please then consider you have my complete agreement over the financial conditioning of any eventual trip you have to make over here in the future for my interests sake."

This is categorical engagement from my part and I do hope you would not have any doubt about it.

But I clearly understand now that uses in the States are simply different and I want, of course, to comply to them, to be agreeable to you, as well as to make your position toward your partner smooth and easy.

In consequence, may I ask you to clarify the following point :

In your letter from April 19, you mentioned :

" a retainer of the kind ... described ... in an earlier letter"

The letter in which a retainer is described is the one dated from January 24 th, where you said :

"If I spent a week in Saigon, I would have to charge you 2.500 dollars plus the cost of plane fare (approximately 2.000), together with any travel and related expenses incurred while en route to and from Saigon."

All that is quite clear and I repeat that I fully agree.

At present your presence in Saigon is not necessary yet. But in the future, in case I have to ask you to come to Saigon, I shall take dispositions for a retainer to be deposited in your account in due time.

And now, "Business is business". Please let me know :

1/ how much I have to pay for undertaking requested activities on my behalf in a professional and official capacity, in Washington ?

2/ the percentage I have to offer you after getting back all my properties and receiving damages from the Vietnamese Government ?

Specifically, this is what I would like to ask you to undertake :

For the restitution of my properties and for the payment of damages, my conviction is that though the decision has to be taken by the Vietnamese Government, suggestions and pressures have to be inspired from highest authorities in Washington.

In crude words, I think that General Thiệu, the head of the Directory, or General Ky, the Prime Minister would never take the necessary steps unless they are convinced that, by doing so, they fulfill President Johnson's wishes anteriorly expressed to them through Ambassador Bunker, on confidential basis.

The main objective I would like to ask you to reach, then, is to undertake such activities, in your professional capacity as well as by social and political relationship, that would lead President Johnson to understand that it is justice to recommend to the Vietnamese Government to restitute all properties illegally confiscated after the I-II-63 Coup d'Etat, including mine, and to make reparations by paying the damages that these properties have suffered.

I understand, dear Mr Counsellor, that such undertakings require much more than professional capacity. It requires friendship, conviction and devotedness, as basic conditions. Then you will need times, opportunity, well-placed and high-positioned friends and money.

Will you please tell me if you are in right to undertake such activities and, in the affirmative, what amount of money you will need for the present and what will be the percentage you will like to partake on the amount of damages we might get thanks to your official and unofficial undertakings ?

In brief, I am asking you to undertake two kinds of proceedings :

- Privately, or semi-officially, to use political and social relationship to persuade President Johnson to recommend to the Vietnamese Government the restitution of illegally confiscated properties.

- Officially, in Vietnam, when the preceding steps are successfully taken, to engage a suit at law for the restitution of these properties, such giving to the Vietnamese Government the opportunity to save face by obeying to laws and justice, not to American's pressure.

Looking forward for your answer, with my best regards to Mrs Patton, I remain, dear Mr Counsellor,

Yours sincerely,

