



23 Feb '67

McLean, Va.

Dear Ed,

Dave Hudson called me when he
got in and asked me to look
into some possible replacements.

I went over to see George
Benson. George has previously tried
to go to Vietnam but no combat
slots are open until '68. He'd very
much like to come out to serve
with you and is checking it out
informally with his boss, Admiral
Lemos, of ISA. I gave a pretty
full and factual description of
what things are like but he'd
like to come - good man. Said
he could understand how ~~you~~ being
able to listen to Asians might
be of some help. I asked him
about Indonesia - he said this
was definitely not in the offing
for him and no prospects. He's
currently running the Korean
Desk. I suggest you drop him
a note directly, Ed. His address
is:

Col George Benson USA
OASD/ISA/FER
Room 4D 777
Pentagon.

Secondly, I talked to John O'-
Donnell so is also interested



on a six month TDY basis, maybe
longer. He plans to be out in
Saigon in early March so you
can talk to him then. John would
be terrific on the local elections
political work. My other suggestion
is that you pull in Mark
Huss. I had a long talk with
Mark back here before he returned
and he said he was willing if
you felt he could do more good
working directly for you. He
listens to the Vietnamese, they
like him and he can write. Benson
has the potential of moving in
on the Vietnamese as well as
providing staff support, I believe.
He impressed the hell out of me
in a low key way.

Can't think of any other sugges-
tions right now.

Another subject. Had an
hour with Bill Vorden yesterday,
Bill's birthday. Also took Bei
Dien and wife to the Super
Giant in McLean. Bill is
writing you a note - he will be
arriving Saigon o/a 1 month prior
to Chiefs of Missions Conference
in Baguio on the 5th. Wants
to get you and Calhoun to-
gether. Will be staying with
Calhoun or with you but would
like in any case to use your
place for informal meetings and



gatherings with Vietnamese. He forgot to write you about Calhoun who is a personal friend and whom he admonished not to be prejudiced but to get to know you and take your advice. He said Calhoun reacted very well to his advice on this.

Bill concurs in your judgement that it's too late to reverse the process on elections and elect ~~the~~ a new assembly first but understands the need for cementing people together and hopes to get you into this full-blast with Calhoun supporting you.

Also Bui Diem plans to arrive on 1 March now at the same time as Bill - ostensibly in preparation for Goldberg but mainly to get off the hook on Ky's visit (I think he'll recommend no go) and to give Ky political advice. He wants him to run, but ain't saying so directly.

Was not too pleased with either Bui Diem or Dinh over the item you picked up in the Saigon and chewed them both out - gently. Had already talked to Dinh about getting down off his soap box - the only



problem is this is how he is
currently making a living. I
pointed out the obvious con-
cerning the business of ~~the~~
Ky, the assassin. Sometimes you
wonder about the Vietnamese
capability for political maturity -
then you see some of the Ameri-
can jackasses braying in this
country who ought to know better.
Am missing one clipping on the
Dinh-Diem waltz so will send
it all in a separate letter to-
morrow.

Would have relayed this all
verbally to Dave and still may
but he promised to call Wed.
or Thurs.

Give my regards to Father
Don, whom you've probably met
by now. Assume he transmitted
my suggestion of Tay Ninh as
a likely place for a short-sting,
rural credit union. Liked the
script for your tape report; and
hope to get a copy. If you'll
let me know when you send it to
the VP I'll follow up to see he
listens this time. I suggest you
play it several times and maybe
shorten it a little - I can't tell from
the script how well the pace will
be maintained and the attention hold.
Maybe at some points you might have the
music first and the explanation of the words
just to vary the rhythm. Regards to all

Reply to even