

September 12, 1963

SUGGESTED NEW VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT
(Selected on basis of capability, compatibility, and representative character.)

President - Nguyen Ngoc Tho

(Vice President currently, his involvement would provide constitutional base for new government and help stabilize it. He is a southerner and a Buddhist.)

Sec State for Presidency - Nguyen Huu Chau

(Was Sec State for Presidency for Ngo Dinh Diem until Mme Nhu had him disgraced and dismissed in 1958. Brilliant lawyer and intellectual, efficient administrator, much respected and admired by Vietnamese and foreigners alike. He is a southerner and a Buddhist.)

~~Sec State for National Defense~~

Alternate: - Vo Van Hai

(Director of Personal Cabinet to President Ngo Dinh Diem, much respected and liked by oppositionists and government members as well; completely honest, efficient, and knows more about inner workings of Presidency than any other man in the GVN. Is a Buddhist and from the Center.)

Sec State for National Defense - Gen. Duong Van Minh

Alternate: - Dr. Phan Huy Quat

(Dr. Quat is a leader of the Dai Viet Party, but has always been considered as more honest, respectable, and reliable than other members of this group. He served as Minister of National Defense in three Bao Dai cabinets, and as Minister of Education in another Bao Dai cabinet. He is a northerner and a Buddhist.

Alternate: - Gen. Tran Van Don

~~Sec State~~

Chief, Joint General Staff - Gen. Duong Van Minh

Alternate: - Gen. Le Van Kim

Sec State for Interior - Bui Van Thinh

(Minister of Interior and, earlier, Minister of Justice, for Diem; directed operations against Binh Xuyen and sects. Founder and chairman of Mouvement pour la lutte et la defense de la liberte, a political party whose vice-chairmen were Vu Van Mau and Tran Chanh Thanh. Thinh and his wife fell victims to Mme Nhu, who accused them of harboring "high ambitions". Thinh thereupon became GVN Ambassador to Tokyo, until resigning from that post in December 1962. He is a magistrate, was President of the Court of Appeals in Saigon, 1950-1954. Currently staying in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He is a southerner and a Buddhist.)

~~Sec State~~ Alternative: - Tran Trung Dung

(Formerly Vice Minister of Defense for Diem, 1954-1960; is considered honest, bright, straightforward, reliable; broke with regime in 1960. Is a Catholic and a northerner. Was a journalist before Geneva period in 1954.)

~~Sec~~ Sec State for Foreign Affairs - Vu Van Mau

(In view of Mau's demonstrated courage in resigning, this would be a popular move with intellectuals and civil servants. However, he might prefer to be Ambassador to France.)

Alternative: - Ngo Dinh Luyen

(The only "untainted" one of the brothers, Luyen is currently Ambassador in London. He is admired by younger Vietnamese intellectuals and students as "western", efficient, and debonair. His appointment would mollify those who still support the Ngo Dinh regime, while being acceptable to the opposition as well, by and large. He is a man of the Center and a Catholic.)

Alternate: - Tran Van Chuong

(Although Chuong was earlier damned by many for lack of courage and because of actions of his wife, he regained a good deal of status by his timely and highly publicized resignation as Ambassador in Washington. He is by earlier training and experience a highly successful lawyer. He is a southerner, and non-religious.) (Currently in Washington.)

Alternate: - Nguyen Quoc Dinh

(Was Foreign Minister in Buu Loc government. Respected, authority on international law. Currently residing in Switzerland.)

Sec State for National Economy - Vu Van Thai

(An able economist and experienced administrator, Thai reorganized the Directorate General of Budget and Foreign Aid for President Diem, and mechanized its operations. Much admired for his intellectual capacities and achievements, he has many enemies, largely as a result of his widely recognized intellectual arrogance and impatience with inefficiency. Currently UN Representative in Togo, Thai is non-religious and a northerner.)

Alternative: - TonThat Thien

(Currently Director General of Vietnam Press Agency, Thien received his Ph. D. in Economics with Freymond at Geneva, has written extensively on Vietnamese economic problems, and though connected with Diem and his government since July 1954, he has managed to retain the respect and friendship of oppositionists. Known for his integrity and ability; a competent administrator and economist. From the Center, and a nominal Buddhist.)

Alternative: - Vo Van Hai

(By academic training and interest an economist, with imaginative ideas on Vietnamese economic development, Hai is discussed above as alternative for Sec State at the

Alternative: - Ung Thi

(One of Vietnam's most successful businessmen, Ung Thi is one of the few such Vietnamese who has "made his pile" in Free Vietnam, and kept his money and other investments in the country (instead of sending it abroad for safekeeping). A northerner and a nominal Buddhist, Ung Thi is a close friend and confidante of both government and opposition personalities.)

Sec State for Finance -

Nguyen Huu Hanh

(Former official of the National Bank of Vietnam, Hanh is opposed to the regime, but has not been openly involved with coup groups. He is acceptable to the Vice President, and also to younger intellectual elements. Origins and religion not known.)

~~Sec~~

Alternative: - Nguyen Thanh Lap

(Vietnam's leading private banker, and Minister of Finance in 1946. A southerner; religious affiliation unknown.)

Alternative: - Buu Hoan

(A professional economist and writer on public finance problems, Ph. D. from London School of Economics, and respected by business and financial circles, and by administrators as well. Origins and religious affiliation unknown.)

Sec State for Information - Tran Trung Dung

(See above under Sec State for Interior, alternatives)

Alternative: - Ton That Thien

(See above under National Economy, alternatives)

Alternative: - Pham Xuan Thai

(Was Minister of Information for Diem during combined cabinet with sects. Is "psywar specialist", a Seventh Day Adventist, who was Political Adviser to Gen. Nguyen Thanh Phuong, then Commanding Cao Dai armies. Takes advice, but would have to be watched carefully because of tendency to build personal political vehicles. A southerner.

Alternate: - Pham Ngoc Thao

Sec State for Civic Action - Tran Ngoc Lien

(A career administrator, dedicated, ambitious, driving, very well organized and systematic, Lien was in 1954 Commissioner for Administration in Central VN. Brought to Saigon by Diem, he organized and directed activities of various rural-oriented governmental agencies. Was Commissioner General for Agricultural Credit and Cooperatives (NACO). Probably apolitical, though eager to be admired and flattered for accomplishments. From Center, a Catholic.)

Alternative: - Tran Quoc Bui

(President of Vietnamese Confederation of Christian Trade Unions, with much practical experience as an administrator and in handling people. Close to Ngo Dinh Nhu, but intrinsically hostile to him. From the Center and a Catholic.)

Alternate: - Pham Ngoc Thao
Sec State for National Education - Fr. Cao Van Luan

(Until August 1963, Rector of University of Hue. Much liked and admired by intellectuals because, though "a creature of the Ngo Dinh family," Luan asserted his independence, encouraged student and faculty participation in Buddhist demonstrations, and broke sharply with family over events in Hue and subsequently. Though a priest, has wide Buddhist friendships and considers self "a catalyst.")

Alternate: - Dr. Pham Huy Quat
Sec State for Health - Dr. Philip Nguyen Van Tho

(Currently Deputy Sec State for Health, Dr. Tho is American trained, progressive, dedicated nationalist, with acceptance among most elite groups in Vietnam. From the Center and a Catholic. His wife is a prominent anti-Nhu member of the Nationalist Assembly, and also is American-educated.)

Alternative: - Dr. Nguyen Ton Hoan

(Acknowledged leader of the Dai Viet Party (southern fragment), Dr. Hoan has been a perpetual aspirant for power in Vietnam. Considered weak and an undynamic leader, he is nevertheless supported by substantial numbers of intellectuals

and would appease their continuing demand for representation in the government, while restricting his field of operations to an area he should be professionally capable of handling. He is a southerner and a Catholic, and is currently in Washington, but will soon return to Paris.)

Alternate: - Dr. Pham Bui Tam

Sec State for Justice - Bui Van Thinh

(A career magistrate and administrator, Thinh served two terms as Minister of Justice for Ngo Dinh Diem. See under Sec State for Interior, above.)

Alternative: Truong Dinh Dzu

(A prominent Saigon lawyer, Maitre Dzu was for many years close to Mme Ngo Dinh Nhu, but was recently imprisoned by the regime, and has more recently been released. Origins ~~and religious affiliation~~ not known; he is a Buddhist.)

Sec State for Rural Affairs - Tran Ngoc Lien

(See under Sec State for Civic Action, above.)

Alternative - Tran Van Lam

(A highly successful pharmacist, Lam became Delegate for South Vietnam when Diem came to power, and administered his area efficiently. Later entered politics and was eventually elected President of the National Assembly. Ran afoul of Mme Nhu, and is currently Ambassador to Australia. Is a southerner and a Catholic, with wide backing among diverse segments of the elite population.)

Sec State for Public Works and Communications - Tran Le Quang

(Presently Sec State for Rural Affairs; an able engineer who directed the Public Works Department for several years, Quang is somewhat tainted by his association with the Diem government, but not irretrievably so.)

Alternate: - Nguyen Tran

(Former Chief of Province in Khanh Hoa (Nha Trang) and at My Tho, a highly successful and admired administrator who was, with Ngo Dinh Nhu, one of the founders of the Can

Lao Party in 1953. Broke with Nhu in 1959, and was shelved to the post of deputy to the Director General of Public Service. Very efficient and ambitious man with excellent rapport with "the people," Tran might not be satisfied with this particular government department, and should also be considered as an alternate for the Sec State at the Presidency. Is from the Center and a Catholic, but with strong Buddhist connections and support.)

Sec State for Labor - Tran Quoc Bun

(See above under Sec State for Civic Action)

Alternate: - Vu Quoc Thuc

(Dean of the Faculty of Law at the University of Saigon, able economist, but hurt by continued and apparently uncourageous ~~relationship~~ association with Diem government. Was target of student jeers on Aug 24 during Vu Van Mau demonstration at the University. Is a northerner and a nominal Buddhist.)

NOTE: The above suggestions have been made with a view to the capability, compatibility, and geographically representative character of the individuals named. Other persons may also be suggested; however, it is felt, on the basis of personal acquaintance with all of the above persons, that they would form a high quality government and would be willing to work together. Certain exceptions might be noted, but only the fact of actual cabinet formation will determine whether rumored antipathies or conflicts are well-founded. Other persons have been eliminated from consideration on the assumption that a military junta ^{is} ~~not~~/not a US objective, ~~but~~ though military backing will be a necessary feature of any new government. Persons whose lack of courage, indecisiveness, ~~weakness~~ or dishonesty are ~~well-known~~ known or believed to be demonstrable, have also been omitted from this listing.