

VN-Elections
Saigon, 26th August 1959.

Dear Friend:

Although the second and final publication of candidates' names was initiated 10 days ago, complete nominal lists of candidates for various areas became available in Saigon yesterday only. This explains the belatedness of this letter. I have my men collect gradually the lists published in Vietnam Press bulletins for you, together with short reports on a few prominent facts in connection with the electoral campaign, a number of handbills passed around by candidates, two or three newspaper cuts, and finally posters (printed by the Department of Information) urging the population to go to the polls. I am sending you all these on the assumption that they can give you an idea of the electoral developments - since you are not here to witness them. Occupational and political affiliation data are not available for each candidate but you'll find herewith the general breakdowns. It might be of interest for you to know: the campaign, now in full swing throughout the country this year is more intense than in 1956; though the second publication is said to be final, there still are a number (6-7 probably) of candidates being sued for non-observance of electoral laws, including Phan-quang Dan and Hoang-co Thuy who run in constituency II of the Prefecture. Hullabaloo is at its highest in this district where Phan-quang Dan and Ngo-sach Vinh (NRM) are fierce opponents. However they can be seen together on the rostrum (see cut) while

their supporters join hands in a real riot. (On their side, the Vietminh propaganda machinery is all out on an impossible campaign to attempt to thwart these elections, claiming that under the Geneva Agreement the Republic has no right to hold ^{separate} elections in this southern zone. Their interpretation of the agreement is very visionary indeed. Realizing after a while that this theme was unsuccessful, they switched to charges of electoral malpractice but were unable to specify nor elaborate.)

My assistants are being too busy to spare some time for the compilation of data on the President's trips though relevant materials are kept up to date. I'll send you tables and statistics later on.

The Department of Foreign Affairs was not willing to publicize the communication (re refutations to Colegrove's charges) sent to Ambassador Tran-van Chuong before he made full use of it. Better ask him when you see him there.

The old bag of bones that I am are still cracking for some rest ever since the hard trips made with you. But as a rule Time Is Money in this peculiar agency. Please remember us kindly to Madame Fishel. We hope to see you back here with a more resisting stomach.

k^pa/lvl

Most sincerely,

Phon-anh

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